

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1257  
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 1181

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: US, CG, PFOR  
SUBJ: US-ZAIRIAN RELATIONS

SUMMARY: AFTER DISPOSING OF ELIMA ARTICLE IN OUR FEB 7 MEETING, FONMIN BULA'S REMARKS ON US-ZAIRIAN RELATIONS REFLECTED ZAIRIAN SENSITIVITIES ABOUT ALLEGED AMERICAN NEGLECT AND MOBUTU'S CONTINUED INTEREST IN MILITARY COOPERATION. DIALOGUE WILL CONTINUE. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER DISCUSSION ELIMA ARTICLE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BULA FEB 7 AND RECEIVING ASSURANCES THAT IN INTEREST US-ZAIRIAN COOPERATION WE WOULD HEAR NO MORE OF IT IN PRESS HERE, I TOLD BULA IN MY JUDGMENT TIME HAD COME TO STOP TALKING ABOUT IMPORTANCE WE BOTH ATTACHED TO GOOD RELATIONS AND TO START TALKING ABOUT AREAS OF MUTUAL INTEREST, DIFFERENCES, AND REAL PROBLEMS IF THERE WERE ANY. HE AGREED. I RECALLED HE HAD SAID AT BEGINNING MEETING HE HAD LITTLE TIME AVAILABLE. DID HE WANT DEFER SUCH DISCUSSION OR SHOULD WE START NOW. HE SAID, "LET'S START AND CONTINUE AFTER YOU RETURN FROM LUANDA".

2. BULA SAID ZAIRIAN PERCEPTION OF BASIC PROBLEM WAS THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD "NOTHING BUT DISDAIN FOR AFRICA". PROOF OF THIS, HE ALLEGED, WAS EARLY MOVE CONFIDENTIAL

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BY SECRETARY TO TAKE NORTH AFRICAN COUNTRIES, "OUR

BROTHERS", OUT OF AFRICAN BUREAU.

3. I SAID THAT IN MY JUDGMENT IT SIMPLY WAS NOT TRUE  
THAT SECRETARY HAD DISDAIN FOR AFRICA. SAME CHARGE HAD  
BEEN LEVELED BY LATIN AMERICANS AND HE HAD DEMONSTRATED  
AS HE WOULD WITH AFRICA THAT IT NOT TRUE. WHAT WAS  
TRUE IN MY VIEW WAS THAT SECRETARY WAS PERSONALLY ENGAGED  
IN MOMENTOUS NEGOTIATIONS INVOTVING PEACE OF WORLD, THAT  
HE WAS ENORMOUSLY OVERBURDENED AND DESPITE HIS GREAT  
INTEREST IN AFRICAN PROBLEMS, US AND HIS PRIORITIES HAD  
TO BE ON RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW, PEKING, DANGER OF MIDDLE  
EAST WAR, RELATIONS WITH OUR OLDEST ALLIES, AND EXTRA-  
ORDINARILY DIFFICULT PROBLEMS SURROUNDING ENERGY AND  
FOOD CRISIS. WHILE I PERSONALLY WISHED HE COULD AND  
WOULD DEVOTE MORE TIME TO AFRICA, I KNEW THAT IT WAS  
PRESSURE OF WORLD EVENTS, NOT DISDAIN, THAT KEPT HIM FROM  
DOING SO. WE ALL HOPED IT WOULD INDEED PROVE POSSIBLE  
AS RESULT EASED TENSIONS ELSEWHERE FOR SECRETARY TO ACQUAINT  
HIMSELF AT FIRST HAND WITH AFRICAN PROBLEMS. I EXPLAINED  
REORGANIZATION STATE DEPARTMENT TO GREECE, TURKEY,  
NATO ALLIES, IN EUROPEAN BUREAU AND NORTH AFRICAN ARABS,  
WHOE MAJOR POLITICAL INTEREST WAS MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM,  
IN NEA HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH SECRETARY'S VIEW OF  
AFRICA.

4. BULA THEN SAID SECRETARY HAD MADE MISTAKE IN MIDDLE  
EAST IN NOT WORKING JOINTLY WITH RUSSIANS IN SEEKING  
SOLUTIONS. I SAID SECRETARY HAD STAYED IN CLOSEST  
CONSULTATIONS WITH SOVIETS THROUGHOUT. WHILE I NOT  
PERSONALLY ACQUAINTED WITH INTRICACIES, I THOUGHT BULA  
SHOULD REFLECT ON QUESTION OF WHAT WE SHOULD HAVE DONE  
IF SADAT OR OTHER ARAB LEADERS HAD ASKED US TO BE  
ACTIVE MEDIATOR. IF THIS WERE INDEED CASE, SAYING YES  
TO MOSCOW WOULD HAVE BEEN SAYING NO TO SADAT. ONE HAD  
TO CHOOSE. IN ANY CASE, IF ALL WENT WELL, IT WOULD  
EVENTUALLY ALL COME TOGETHER AT GENEVA CONFERENCE  
THICH APPARENTLY WAS MAIN SOVIET DESIRE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED  
THERE WAS SOMETHING TO THIS POINT OF VIEW.

5. BULA SAID HE UNDERSTOOD PROBLEM WITH SOVIETS BUT HE  
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DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY WE WERE PASSIVE WHEN SOVIETS WERE  
SENDING MIGS TO CONGO BRAZZAVILLE AND MISSILES, TANKS,  
AND MIGS TO UGANDA. WHY DIDN'T WE HELP ZAIRE? WHY DIDN'T  
WE STOP SOVIETS?

6. I REPLIED WE UNDERSTOOD THERE WERE A FEW MIGS AND  
MISSILES IN UGANDA BUT HAD NO CONFIRMATION ABOUT SOVIET  
BATTLE TANKS. I SAID WE KNEW THERE WERE MORE THAN A

THOUSAND SOVIET TANKS IN SYRIA AND HUNDREDS OF MIGS IN MIDDLE EAST. AS FOR MIGS ACROSS RIVER, WE WERE INVESTIGATING WHAT HE HAD TOLD EASUM, AND AS FAR AS I KNEW WE HAD NO CONFIRMATION THAT THEY WERE COMING. HOWEVER, HE HAD JUST YESTERDAY ACCOMPANIED MOBUTU TO BRAZZAVILLE AND I WONDERED IF THEY HAD RAISED QUESTION WITH NGOUABI. HE REPLIED TWO PRESIDENTS HAD MET ALONE AND HE DID NOT KNOW. HE HAD WAITED IN VAIN FOR HIS CONGOLESE COLLEAGUE TO RAISE SUBJECT. IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN COMPATIBLE WITH TENETS GOVERNING DIPLOMACY BETWEEN AFRICAN BROTHERS FOR HIM TO RAISE ISSUE. I TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO SAY I HOPED HE WOULD NOT BE AS "DIPLOMATIC" IN DEALING WITH ME ON CONCERN OF GOZ VIS-A-VIS US POLICY.

7. I SAID I HOPED SOVIETS WOULD EXERCISE RESTRAINT IN ARMING ZAIRE'S NEIGHBORS AND OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES BUT OBSERVED THAT CONGOLESE REACTION TO WORD OF ZAIRIAN MIRAGE PURCHASE MIGHT HAVE BEEN SIMILAR TO HIS REACTION TO WORD OF CONGO GETTING MIGS. HE THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING IN THAT BUT SAID MIRAGES WERE ESSENTIAL FOR DEFENSE OF ZAIRE. I SAID THAT WAS FAIR JUDGMENT BUT IT REGRETTABLE THAT SCARCE FOREIGN EXCHANGE IN AFRICA GENERALLY COULD NOT BE DEVOTED TO INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RATHER THAN TO FANCY ARMS WHICH HOPEFULLY WOULD NEVER BE USED.

8. COMMENT: WE WENT ON TO TALK OF LESSER PROBLEMS BUT BULA'S REMARKS, I BELIEVE, ACCURATELY REFLECT ZAIRIAN SENSITIVITIES ABOUT ALLEGED AMERICAN NEGLECT AND CONTINUED MOBUTU INTEREST IN MILITARY COOPERATION. OTHER MAJOR SORE POINT IN OUR RELATIONS IN MY JUDGMENT IS ANGOLA. I AM CONVINCED MOBUTU AND HOLDEN

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BELIEVE THAT OUR TEPID RESPONSE TO THEIR REPEATED REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE LEAVE THEM WITH WORST OF BOTH WORLDS. IN THEIR VIEW RELATIONS IS JUST GOOD ENOUGH TO KEEP ALIVE OLD CHARGE BY THEIR ENEMIES THAT THEY ARE AMERICAN STOOGES BUT NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO MAKE IT WORTH THEIR WHILE TO BE GENUINELY RESPONSIVE TO MANY OF OUR CONCERN. I'LL BE DISCUSSING THIS WITH KILLORAN IN LUANDA, SOUNDING BULA UPON MY RETURN, AND PERHAPS ADVANCING RECOMMENDATIONS SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

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